

SUMMARY

HA-1521

SANDERS LOG HOUSE
2106 Ruffs Mill Road
Bel Air, Maryland 21014

This house probably dates from the last quarter of the 19th century when the property was owned by James and Gertrude Monks, or possibly the first quarter of the 20th century, when it was owned by William and Edith Herrman. In 1868, James Monks purchased 18 acres of "Wheeler and Clark's Contrivance" from John Alexander for \$647. In his will dated 1889, he left his real and personal property to his wife, and she sold 16 acres to the Herrmans for \$1,000.00 in 1908.

The 1878 Martenet Map does show a structure on the site occupied by "Sanders (col'd)", so it is possible the house was being rented to a black farmer. The house was certainly standing in 1928, when the owners of the land sold one acre "whereon the buildings are located" to Alexander L. Barnett.

Unfortunately, land records and maps provide clues but no concrete evidence as to the age and occupants of the house.

This house is being demolished by the owner, as of August-September 1980. The entire roof was gone as was the bulk of the siding and interior trim. This allowed for a detailed examination of the house's framework, which is log with a balloon frame addition.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

HA- 1521

MAGI # 1315216504

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Sanders Log House

AND/OR COMMON

John Lee Davis House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2106 Ruffs Mill Road

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland 21014

COUNTY

Harford

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**

___DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

___STRUCTURE

___SITE

___OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

___PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

___BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

___IN PROCESS

___BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

___OCCUPIED

☒ UNOCCUPIED

___WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE☒ YES RESTRICTED

___YES UNRESTRICTED

___NO

PRESENT USE

___AGRICULTURE

___MUSEUM

___COMMERCIAL

___PARK

___EDUCATIONAL

___PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___ENTERTAINMENT

___RELIGIOUS

___GOVERNMENT

___SCIENTIFIC

___INDUSTRIAL

___TRANSPORTATION

___MILITARY

___OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John L. Davis

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

2108 Ruff's Mill Road

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air, Maryland 21014

___ VICINITY OF

Hickory, Maryland

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 926

Folio #: 554

STREET & NUMBER

40 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___FEDERAL ___STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

66-521

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☒ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This 1-1/2 story house in 3 parts is located on the southwest side of Ruff's Mill Road, 1/4 mile east of Rte. 1. The structure faces northeast and is approximately 25' from the edge of the roadway, and measures approximately 18'4" wide by 35' deep overall.

When examined on September 20, 1980, this house was in the process of being demolished. The roofing material and rafters, as well as most interior and exterior cladding had already been removed.

There are 3 distinct parts of this house, each representing a particular era of technology; namely a log section, with an attached balloon frame addition, and a modern 1 story platform framed shed addition attached to the latter.

Log Section

This section is 1-1/2 stories with one room up and one down. It measures 18'4" wide by 15'2" deep, and sits on an 18" rubble foundation with no basement. The logs used to frame the walls measure 8-10" high and approximately 6-8" thick, and are hewn on two sides only, the interior and exterior faces. The logs are joined at the corners by V-notching; the end and side plates were pinned (for a thickness of two logs only) with 1" diameter wooden pins. The logs were chinked with random size boards toe nailed into place, and an application of hair-lime plaster. The floor and ceiling joists are also logs hewn on the tops only. The current owner who is doing the demolition reported that the roof rafters were mitered saplings with the bark left on. Although the rafters were removed, it was possible to determine that they had been notched at the outside edge of the plate, and attached to the plate with cut nails. Judging from the variations in the textures of the bark still on the logs, it is evident that at least two and possibly three types of trees were used in the construction of the house. The remaining floorboards are random width (5"-6 1/2" X 3/4") machine produced tongue and groove planking attached to the joists with cut nails. This flooring material extended throughout both floors of the log and balloon frame sections. cursory examination did not reveal earlier nail holes in the joists of the log section, but it is possible that this is not the original floor.

The front wall (NE) contains a doorway 2'8" X 6'8" with a modern wooden door. There are three window openings on the ground floor, each a different size. The front (NE) wall opening measures 2'7" X 4'3", the south west opening 2'6 1/2" X 4'1", and the northwest opening 2'8" X 4'7". The window openings were framed with circular sawn boards, none of which had whitewash on them. However, no conclusive proof of window enlargement could be found. The southeast wall, adjacent to the balloon section contains an entryway into that addition. A stairway leading to the upper story and made with machine sawn carriages rests against this wall, the bottom platform being against the northwest wall. The treads and risers of this stairway are the same tongue and groove planking used for the floors.

Continued (See Description Continuation Sheet No.1)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
REHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Land records extending back to 1868 indicate that this house stands on a portion of a tract called "Wheeler and Clark's Contrivance." John and Matilda Alexander are recorded as the grantors on a deed selling 18 acres to James and Gertrude Monks.¹ When John Monks died in 1889, he left all of his land and possessions to his wife,² and she held the land until selling it in 1908.³ Not until 1928 was the 18 acres divided to parcel off the 1 acre section on which this house stands.⁴

The 1858 Jennings and Herrick map shows no structure at this location on Ruff's Mill Road. However, the 1878 Martenet Map shows a structure identified as "Sander's [col'd]". Thus there is a possibility that the Monk's rented the land and house to a black farmer.

Architecturally, this house reflects the style and scale of other 19th century vernacular dwellings in Harford County. If, and the evidence suggests, the house was remodeled in the late 19th century, including the replacement of a fireplace with a stove, larger window openings, lathe and plaster on the interior and clabboards on the exterior, then this is an interesting study of a dwelling being changed deliberately to make it appear more stylish and current, and less rude.

This structure is also significant since it incorporates two very different methods of construction. The early section traces its roots back to 17 century log buildings, and helps underscore the fact that this is a plain rural house. The later balloon framed section reflect the acceptance of newer construction methods by the builder, and proves that machine sawn lumber and milled flooring were available in the area.

The small overall size of the log section, 18'X15' and its original 1 room up and 1 down plan is testimony of the slight space requirements that were adequate for 19th century Americans. However, the fact that an addition was built shows that the occupant's space requirements had increased, and the small log house was not adequate.

Finally, the fact that this house is being demolished is significant. Harford County is experiencing a period of growth, and much farmland is being converted to residential building sites. While this particular house is not being demolished for that reason, it nevertheless serves to underscore that many of the county's early structures, both agricultural and domestic are disappearing.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to learn more about the builder and early occupants with available resources.

Liber WHD 19 Folio 412 Land Record
2. Liber JMM 11 Folio 482 Court Record

3. Liber WSF 122 Folio 472 Land Record
4. Liber 211 Folio 86

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

NA-1521

Land, Will and Equity Records of Harford County

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Phillip R. Lord, Historic Site Surveyor

October, 1980

ORGANIZATION

Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning

DATE

838-6000 ext. 207

STREET & NUMBER

45 South Main Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air, Maryland 21014

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

HA-1521
John Lee Davis House

At the top level, only a 42" knee wall and the flooring remain. No framed openings were visible in the walls. a 17" X 18" opening in the floor on the SE side accommodated the stove pipe. Inside the log section, all the walls were whitewashed, except for a major portion of the southeast wall, where the stove was located. And the ceiling, which shows no traces of white-wash, but only the nail holes where the lathing had been attached. At this point, an interesting possibility can be raised. The room downstairs had been covered with lathe and plaster, most of the lathing having been cut by machine. Some riven lathe was found though, in the NW corner by the stairs. Certain changes suggest that this house was remodeled. Specifically, there is a stone fireplace footing underneath the floor, extending 12" out from the sill, and approximately 2 feet on either side of the present stove stie, for a total width of 5 1/2 feet. The area of this footing corresponds with the "ghost" area of the southeast wall which was never white-washed. Also, the 1st joist, 21" from the southeast wall is a replacement made of machine sawn lumber, unlike the other log joists. This would indicate that an earlier masonry fireplace was removed and replaced with a stove. It is also interesting to note that in the NE & SW front and rear wall under each joist in the wall pocket, is a shim of 1' machine sawn lumber. Evidence would tend to suggest that 1) there was a masonry fireplace pre-dating the stove 2) there may have been an earlier type of flooring material 3) the window openings may have been enlarged to accommodate double hung sashes 4) the 1st floor ceiling may have been raised slightly to increase headroom.

The exterior of the structure presents evidence of changes too. All the logs were originally whitewashed, but have been covered by two later additions. First, there were crude machine sawn bevel clapboards with 5"-6" to the weather. These are now covered by modern felt paper and wooden shingles, painted white.

Balloon Section

This addition has a full basement (with uncoursed rubble foundation walls) and measures 15'2" wide by 16'2" deep. It is entered through the front log portion at the southwest wall, or through an exterior door on the northwest wall. The height of the studs reveals that this section was also 1-1/2 stories high with one room up and one down. Apparently this section housed a kitchen. Modern plumbing fixtures, bathtub, toilet and sink are found only in the later 1 story shed addition, on the southeast wall. This portion measures 4'6" wide by 23' long. Machine made cut nails were observed in the balloon section, and wire nails in the shed section. A modern patio with a poured concrete slab and 4 foot high cinder block wall occupies the area adjacent to the NW wall of both the log and balloon sections.

SUMMARY

HA-1521

JOHN LEE DAVIS HOUSE
2106 Ruffs Mill Road
Bel Air, Maryland 21014

This house dates from the last quarter of the 19th century, when the lot was owned by James & Gertrude Monks, or the first quarter of the 20th century, when it was owned by William & Edith Herrman. In 1868, James Monks purchased 18 acres of "Wheeler & Clarks Contrivance" from John Alexander for \$647. In his will dated in 1889, he left his real and personal property to his wife, and she sold 16 acres to the Herrmans for \$1000 in 1908. (The 1878 Martenet's Map lists only a building belonging to Jno. Alexander.)

The house was built at least by 1928. In 1919 the lot was purchased for \$1500 by J. Milton & Ethel I. Peterson, who in 1928 sold the one acre "whereon the buildings are located" to Alexander L. Barnett.

The current owners intend to demolish the house in the near future--it is unfortunate that there is so little information on the property or previous owners to amplify the title search, and that the interior--and, hence architectural evidence--was inaccessible and unable to be documented.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

HA- 1521
MAGI #13152104
65

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

John Lee Davis House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2106 Ruffs Mill Road nr. Hickory

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Harford

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

___ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

___ STRUCTURE

___ SITE

___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

___ PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

___ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

___ IN PROCESS

___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

___ UNOCCUPIED

___ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

___ YES: RESTRICTED

___ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☒ NO

PRESENT USE

___ AGRICULTURE

___ COMMERCIAL

___ EDUCATIONAL

___ ENTERTAINMENT

___ GOVERNMENT

___ INDUSTRIAL

___ MILITARY

___ MUSEUM

___ PARK

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___ RELIGIOUS

___ SCIENTIFIC

___ TRANSPORTATION

___ OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John Lee Davis

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

2106 Ruffs Mill Road

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

MD 21014

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

40 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

HA-1521

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This one-story shingled house with a rear addition is located on the southwesterly side of Ruffs Mill Road, just east of Conowingo Road (U.S. Rte. 1).

With a gable roof and brick interior chimney in the east end, the house faces north and is two bays wide and one bay deep. The window on the north facade has 6/6 sash and plain, wide trim. The interior plan is said to consist of two rooms with a winder staircase in the center. The house is said to be log, but there is no exterior sign of this and admission to the house was not possible.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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The current owners intend to demolish the house in the near future--it is unfortunate that there is so little information on the property or previous owners to amplify the title search, and that the interior--and, hence architectural evidence--was inaccessible and unable to be documented.

- 1. Liber WHD 19, Folio 412.
- 2. Liber WSF 122, Folio 472.
- 3. Liber JAR 162, Folio 244.
- 4. Liber DGW 211, Folio 86.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land, Will & Equity Records of Harford County

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Natalie Shivers, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Historic District Commission of Harford County

DATE

2/80

STREET & NUMBER

45 South Main Street

TELEPHONE

838-6000 X207

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland 21014

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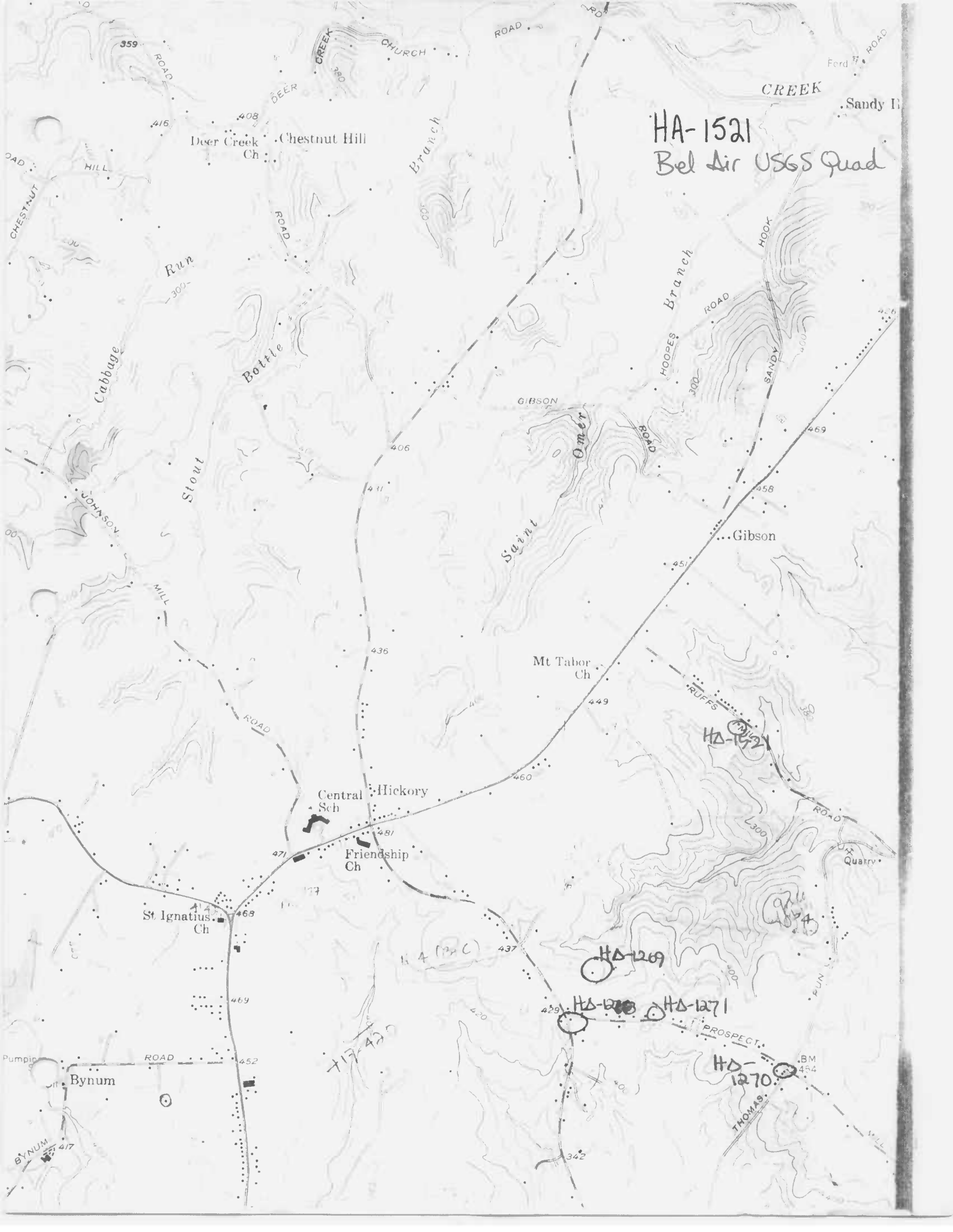
RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

JOHN LEE DAVIS HOUSE

Title Search

HA-1521

1. 926/554 May 12, 1973 Grantor: Grover Cleveland Coldiron &
wf. Mary Ellen Coldiron
Grantee: John Lee Davis & wife Bertha
E. Davis
Acreage: 1 A.
2. GRG 849/429 July 17, 1970 Grantor: Mary & Robert Nevin, et. al.,
heirs of Mary Hoopes
Grantee: Grover Cleveland Coldiron &
wf. Mary Ellen Coldiron
Acreage: 1 A.
3. TLA 31/105 March 16, 1963 Will Records, Will of Mary Hoopes
4. GCB 265/250 April 1, 1941 Grantor: Alexander L. & Mattie Barnett
Grantee: Clement D. & Mary P. Hoopes
Acreage: 1 A.
5. DGW 211/86 Oct. 19, 1928 Grantor: J. Milton & Ethel I. Peterson
Charles L. & Cornelia H. Vail
Grantee: Alexander L. Barnett
Acreage: "Wheeler & Clark's Contrivance"
1 A.
6. JAR 162/244 Feb. 21, 1919 Grantor: Wm. W. & Edith O. Herrman
Grantee: J. Milton & Ethel I. Peterson
Sum: \$1500
Acreage: "Wheeler & Clark's Contrivance"
16A., 3R., 14 P
7. WSF 122/472 April 25, 1908 Grantor: Gertrude R. Monks, Widow
Grantee: Wm. W. & Edith M. Herrman
Sum: \$1000
Acreage: "Wheeler & Clark's Contrivance"
16 A., 3 R., 14 P
8. Will Jmm 11/482 Jan. 3, 1889 Will of James Monks
9. WHD 19/412 Jan. 29, 1868 Grantor: John & Matilda Alexander
Grantee: James H. Monks
Sum: \$647
Acreage: "Wheeler & Clarks Contrivance"
18 A. 1R 38 P





HA-1521

Sander's Log House (Demolished)

Hickory, Md.

Phillip R. Lord 9/80

Northeast



HA-1521

Sander's Log House (Demolished)
Hickory, Md.

Phillip R. Lord 9/80
Southeast



HA-1521

Sander's Log House (Demolished)
Hickory, Md.

Phillip R. Lord 9/80

Interior - showing riven lathe and
wooden chinking



HA-1521

Sander's Log House (Demolished)
Hickory, Md.

Phillip R. Lord 9/80

Pin at corner below plate log



John Lee Davis House HA-1521
2106 Ruffs Mill Rd.
Bel Air, Md. 21014
Natalie Shivers
August, 1979 - to be demolished